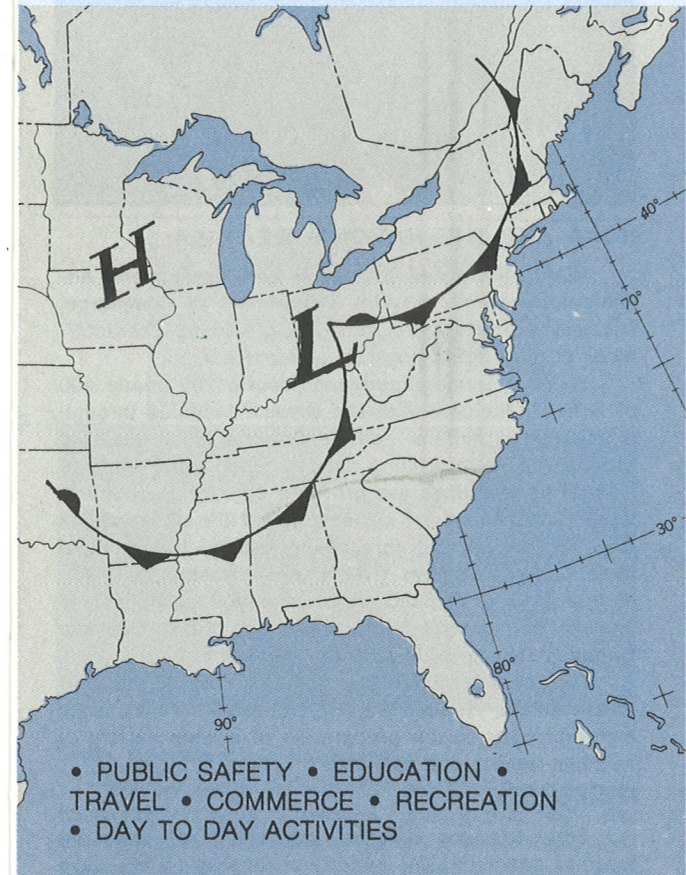
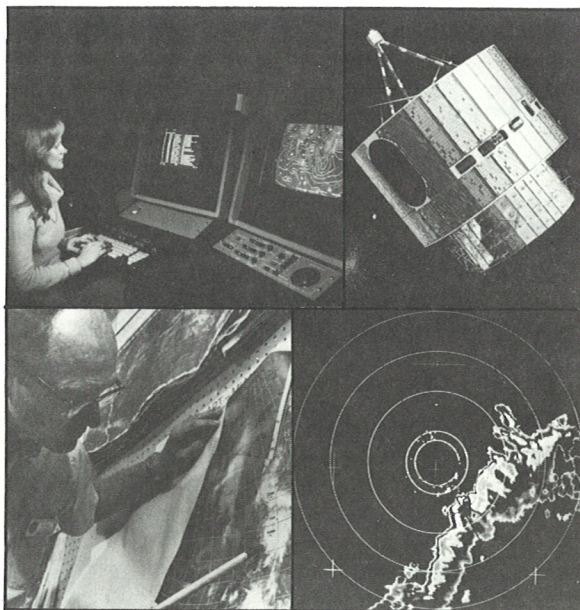


NOAA/National Weather Service

Public's Guide to General Weather Information



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration



NOAA AND THE NATION'S WEATHER

NOAA, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration within the U.S. Department of Commerce, is responsible for monitoring and predicting characteristics of the earth's physical environment.

Weather is monitored and reported by nearly 400 of NOAA's National Weather Service facilities through a network of surface and upper-air stations, weather radars, and earth-orbiting environmental satellites. Additional observations are provided by various cooperators. Communications systems speed the observations to a central weather forecasting facility, the National Meteorological Center (NMC), near Washington, D.C. Meteorologists at NMC use computer technology to analyze and predict future weather patterns over the United States and the northern hemisphere.

Guidance material from NMC is relayed back to local National Weather Service stations where it assists meteorologists in the preparation of a wide variety of weather reports and forecasts.

FORECASTS

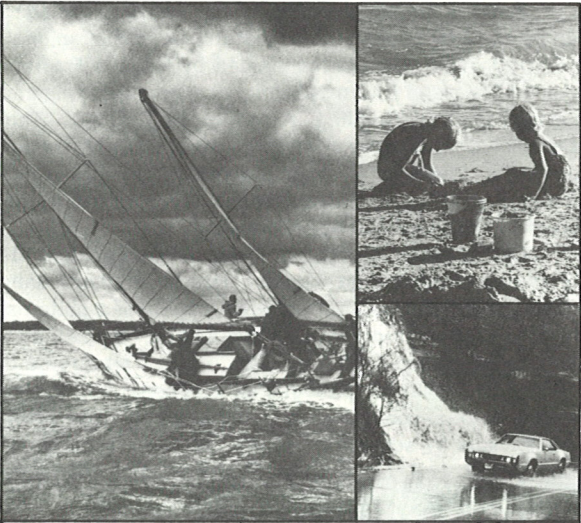
Forecasts are detailed predictions of expected weather conditions for periods of time up to five days in advance. They may refer to an individual city or an area as large as a State.

Local, Zone, and State Forecasts

Prepared several times a day to predict the weather, in detail, for the next 36 to 48 hours. A "local" forecast applies to a city and its immediate surroundings. A "zone" forecast applies to a small portion of a State. A "State" forecast applies to the entire State.

Extended Forecasts

Issued daily to predict weather over a State in broad terms for a period three days beyond that of the State forecast.



Travelers' Forecasts

Prepared in two forms. One is issued nationwide for about 90 cities and consists of a one-word statement on the expected weather and the forecast high and low temperature for the next 36 to 48 hours for each city. The other is issued by some local National Weather Service offices to describe general driving conditions over routes within a few hundred miles of the city where the office is located.

Recreation Forecasts

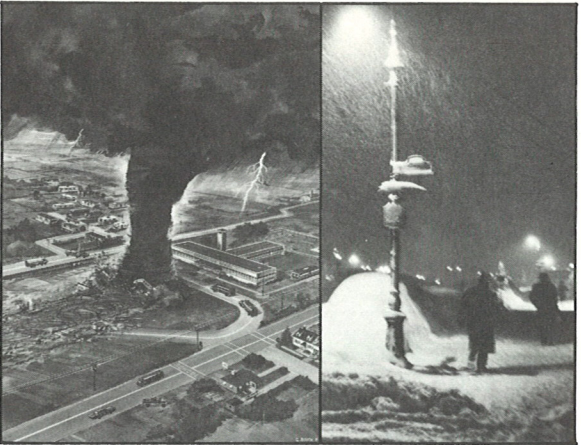
Issued by selected National Weather Service offices based on local needs and office capabilities. Forecasts for boating and skiing areas are two of the more popular examples.

Watches and Warnings

Issued in connection with hazardous weather—tornadoes, winter storms, hurricanes, flash floods, and the like. A *Watch* is issued, where possible, well in advance to alert the public to the *possibility* of dangerous weather developing. A *Warning* is normally issued when the particular hazard is *imminent or reported*. For brochures describing various weather hazards and suggested precautions for each, contact the local National Weather Service office, or write for the *Disaster Preparedness Catalog*, National Weather Service, NOAA, Attn. Wx5, Silver Spring, MD 20910.

River and Flood Forecasts and Warnings

Provide daily information on stages of major rivers and streams and, when necessary, warnings of potential flood conditions.



OUTLOOKS

Outlooks are estimates of general weather conditions for periods beyond five days from the date of issue. Naturally, such predictions have less precision and detail than short-term forecasts. They are useful for general planning, however.

6- to 10-Day Outlooks

Issued three times a week. Give estimates of temperature and precipitation for each State in very broad terms (with respect to normal).

Average Monthly Weather Outlooks

Issued shortly before the 1st and 15th of each month. Deal with changes from the average in temperature and precipitation over broad areas of the Nation for the next 30 days. Available on a subscription basis from Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402.

Seasonal Outlooks

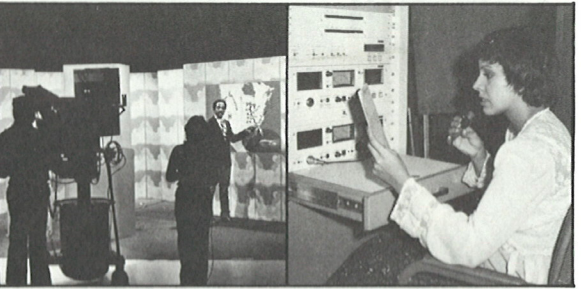
Issued the last week of February, May, August, and November. Project temperature changes from the average for the following three months. Occasionally includes a precipitation outlook. Available in appropriate issues of the *Average Monthly Weather Outlook*. (See above.)

DISTRIBUTION

National Weather Service products are distributed in a number of ways. In addition to systems operated by local weather offices, information is given to the news media and the telephone industry for relay to the public.

CITY EDITION

Metropolitan area weather: Rain today and tonight. High near 70. Low near 50. Details and map on page B2.



Radio, Television, and Newspapers

Primary outlet for National Weather Service forecasts and warnings. Coverage varies greatly from station to station and paper to paper as dissemination of weather information is a voluntary service. Many cable TV systems have a channel devoted entirely or in part to weather.

Telephone

Recordings available at most National Weather Service offices. For a listing of these phones see city's telephone directory under "United States Government, Department of Commerce, National Weather Service," or "National Weather Service," or "Weather."

Large capacity weather information recordings are operated by telephone companies at some locations with forecasts supplied by the National Weather Service. For these listings, see the city's directory under "Weather" or front pages of the directory.

The long distance information operator can provide you with the numbers of weather recordings in other cities, where available.

NOAA Weather Radio

Provides continuous information directly from National Weather Service offices at about 350 locations. Radios with the required frequencies are available at modest prices. These frequencies are also found on many multiband portables. Some special radios have a warning alarm that can be activated by the transmitting office in the event of hazardous weather developments.



Distribution Guide

The table below is a quick reference guide to the most likely source of forecasts and outlooks. Based on public interest, the news media decides what material is used. This may result in a great variation from one locale to another. Most telephone recordings are limited to local forecasts, but a few carry other types of information—check the local directory.

- Availability: A — Always;
U — Usually;
O — Occasionally
R — Rarely;

	newspapers	radio/tv	telephone recordings	NOAA Weather Radio	subscription
Forecast or Outlook					
Local or Zone	U	A	A	A	
State	U	O	R	U	
Extended	U	U	R	U	
Watches, Warnings	O	U	U	A	
River Stage	U	R	R	U	
Travelers	O	O	O	U	
Recreation	O	U	R	U	
6 - 10 Day Outlook	O	R	R	R	A
Monthly Outlook	U	O	R	R	A
Seasonal Outlook	U	O	R	R	A

If additional information is needed which the nearest National Weather Service office cannot supply, please write to National Weather Service, Attn. W112, Silver Spring, MD 20910.

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office
Washington, D.C. 20402 (per 100)
Stock Number 003-018-00100-4

WEATHER OBSERVATIONS AND RECORDS

Observations of current temperature, humidity, wind, pressure, and highest and lowest temperatures are usually transmitted by commercial radio and television, telephone recording systems, and NOAA Weather Radio for the localities they serve.

Data such as the previous day's highest and lowest temperature and precipitation amounts are generally carried in newspapers for both the local area and other cities. Many papers carry foreign reports. Television and radio weather programs sometimes carry selected data, primarily for U.S. cities.

Records of past weather, which also are compiled and analyzed to describe climate on a local, regional, or worldwide basis, are maintained by NOAA's Environmental Data and Information Service, National Climatic Center, Federal Building, Asheville, N.C. 28801. This Center has brochures describing many of the services available. National Weather Service offices throughout the Nation maintain some climatic records, mainly related to their particular service areas.

The *Weekly Series of Daily Weather Maps* is another source of past weather data. It contains daily charts of surface weather patterns, upper wind patterns, high and low temperatures, and 24-hour precipitation across the United States for each week. This source is especially useful for educational purposes, but is also valuable to anyone interested in weather. The maps are for sale by subscription from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

Various reference books dealing with the climate of the United States and other countries can often be found in public libraries. Such references are an important source of general climatic data.

